

Hereford Heckler



The bulletin of Hereford Solidarity League
Freedom • Equality • Community
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Free/Donation

News in brief

YOU'RE BEING WATCHED

Cops in Ross-on-Wye are now trialling head cameras as part of a new initiative to help fight crime ... or is that a new initiative to monitor our every movement and record everything we get up to. The UK is the most watched country in the world. Where will it end.

CUTS FOR DRUGS PROJECT

Herefordshire Council has cut funds from a vital community project that helps keep teenagers away from drugs and alcohol. Bromyard Drug Forum have lost out on a £3,000 grant and the cuts could lead to more anti-social behaviour in the town. Then we can have more cops with cameras and more CCTV to monitor the streets, more vandalism, violence and more young lives wasted through drink and drugs. Or we could just invest a bit in stopping it all happen in the first place. Nice one, Roger.

YES TO WIND FARM

Golden Valley residents are objecting to plans for a new wind farm on local hills. The choice for us is simple: either you generate your own electricity or you rely on big energy companies to do it for you on a large scale. Perhaps they would rather a nuclear powerstation in their backyard.

LOCAL HOMES FOR ALL

Herefordshire Council has backed a divisive plan to give 'local homes to local people'.

With more than 5,000 people on the housing waiting list, we think homes should be provided for all of them, whether they're from Peterchurch, Preston or Poland. But the truth is the council are useless at housing anyone. If you are in desperate need of housing and the council are doing nothing, remember that squatting is an option and is also legal. Find out more from the Advisory Service for Squatters on 0845 644 5814 or visit www.squatter.org.uk

SLIPPERY AND SLIMEY: A PORTRAIT OF CORRUPTION



Herefordshire MPs Bill Wiggin (left) and Paul Keetch were exposed for claiming expenses on designer furniture, food, mortgages that didn't exist, home renovations, lampshades and

cleaning. We can't possibly imagine what it must be like scraping by on a wage of £65,000, whilst claiming for almost every purchase you make. Must be real tough, guys. We really hate pity you.

BYPASS STALLED

Plans for a Hereford bypass have yet again been put on hold after government officials refused funding for the project.

Acting on behalf of the council, the West Midlands Regional Assembly was applying for at least half of the estimated £130 million for the road.

But Herefordshire Council had failed to even decide upon a route for the road before asking the government for funds.

In a letter leaked to the *Hereford Heckler*, the Department for Transport told the WMRA that plans for the 'outer distributor road' are premature.

"The promotor should ... expand its current study work and investigate a full range of options for addressing the transport challenges in the area." In plain English, go and do your homework, roads aren't the only option!

Government funding for the bypass has been

refused several times previously because of the severe consequences it would have on the local environment. Current plans will either take the road west through the village of Breinton or east around the Lugg Meadows; both will be problematic.

Herefordshire Council plan to raise the rest of the funds by selling off land to developers, who will be building an estimated 8,000 new homes in the city.

What is obvious is the need to look beyond quick-fix traffic solutions and to see how the project will impact the environment and the the lives of our children and our grandchildren.

Is there anyone left out there that does not believe climate change is now inevitable and that reducing the burning of fossil fuels is a necessity?

There is now only one solution: changing our lifestyles and improving our county's existing facilities ... not new roads.



HELEN HECKLER

■ I was sorry to hear that Margaret Thatcher hasn't been having the best of luck recently, with the former Prime Minister taking a tumble and breaking her arm. Not being one to revel in the pain of others, yours truly would like to offer the suggestion of a steady diet of school milk, miner's blood and the bread from the mouths of the working class as healthy menu to get old Mags back to her best.

■ I cried and I wept, and then I cried and wept some more; Hereford's Conservative Club has closed down. Not really, I was over the moon, wasn't I! :)

Suffering from a lack of membership, club officials decided to end it all in June. Unfortunately social clubs like these are going under on a regular basis, right across the country. But this is the Tory club, so what do I care! If only the club's lack of support was a reflection of their party's popularity in general!

■ It appears that Prince Charles has taken a considerable pay rise over the past year. Exactly how dropping out of the Queen's womb is an achievement that merits being financially set for life is beyond me. But if a rich person whose ancestors won a battle some time in history decrees it so, then who am I to argue?

■ After being found out, MPs up and down the country were queueing up to pay back the huge sums of money they'd fraudulently taken. And pay it back they did, writing cheques for tens of thousands of pounds! How many of us are able to do that?! If any more proof was needed that politicians are a different class of people, that was surely it. Parliament is riddled with rich, power-hungry, self-serving scumbags like these and I hate the lot of them. Kick 'em all out!

Sexy kisses to all my little sweetpeas out there

Helen xx

NO PREJUDICE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Herefordshire Council just can't resist wasting our money. All the dosh they've spent justifying a bypass keeps coming to nothing. They just can't stop throwing the moola at the ESG (Empty Shops. Great!) even when almost everyone is against it. And then there's the fiasco over the money spent on relocating the council ... need I go on?

Luckily not everyone in the pay of these half wits is wasting our council tax. While the elected members are doing their best to screw up this county the Equality and Diversity Team down at Plough Lane are doing their best to make this a great place to live.

The launch of the 'No Prejudice in HEREFordshire' campaign is a rare case of money well spent. The aim of the campaign is to get businesses and organisations

to sign a pledge to challenge all forms discrimination whenever they happen. It is hoped that this will make people question their own prejudices, and show people that challenging discrimination is a responsibility that we all share.

Unfortunately there are still some people in this world that need to be told that using the word 'pikey', or belittling women or gay and lesbians is as equally unacceptable as racism. But often the problem is having the confidence to challenge these remarks, so this campaign has been set up to show support for those people who do speak out against prejudice. Obviously there is a long way to go in educating people to respect one another but we feel that this campaign goes some way towards that.

IT WAS NEVER GOING TO WORK

"The best laid schemes of mice and men / Go often askew / And leaves us nothing but grief and pain / For promised joy!" — Robert Burns

These lines have never applied more accurately than to the current situation in Zimbabwe.

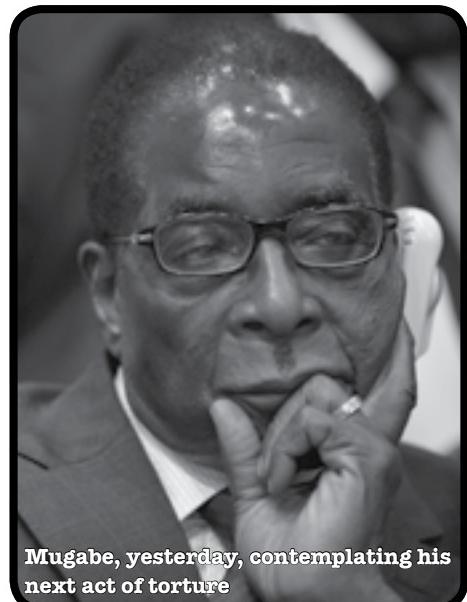
Zimbabwe's influential generals are still refusing to salute Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai six months after he joined President Robert Mugabe in a unity government.

Almost two months before the first anniversary of the historic 15th September power sharing agreement, which gave Zimbabweans hope that Mugabe was being eased out of power, an unpalatable reality is beginning to sink in.

Zimbabwe has been out of the news recently and most people think the situation there has greatly improved, however evidence exists that shows this is not the case. It is becoming more and more evident that the coalition government was just a ploy by ZANU-PF to get international sanctions lifted from their top officials.

The only people now being arrested and brought to court, apart from the occasional housebreaker and bank robber, are Movement for Democratic Change members and, of course, white farmers. So far, five MDC MPs have been sentenced to more than six months in prison, the minimum sentence that allows them to be thrown out of parliament. This has been seen as one of ZANU-PF's strategies to regain the parliamentary majority they lost in the March 2008 elections.

Resistance campaigner and Hereford resident, Simbarashe Muzembe, said: "Whilst it is very clear that MDC have very little power and influence in policy making and ZANU-PF continue to rule with an iron fist, the people of Zimbabwe have to stand aside and watch in a state of limbo. I still maintain that the



Mugabe, yesterday, contemplating his next act of torture

only way forward for Zimbabwe is to have an opposition party with its own militia."

Meanwhile, independent monitors of the performances of Tsvangirai's MDC and Mugabe's ZANU-PF (such as Sokwanele in Zimbabwe and Idasa in Pretoria) agree that even as the MDC has stuck both in deed and spirit to the Global Political Agreement, ZANU-PF violates it daily.

"If Zimbabwe is to truly move towards peace, justice and democracy, ZANU-PF has to be removed. After a 30-year rule Zimbabwe has suffered some of the worst economic crisis in recent history. Human rights are abused on a daily basis and there is no rule of law.

"How this can be achieved is one of the biggest problems of today, but without the help of the international community it will be impossible," said Muzembe.

On what does the survival of oppression depend? On us! On whom must we depend for its demolition? On ourselves! —Bertolt Brecht

'BETTER THAN BUTTONS' ... CADBURY WORKERS' DEMO

Angry Cadbury workers have demonstrated outside the company's Marlbrook plant after they broke a three-year pay agreement.

Around 25 staff held placards outside the firm's factory near Leominster saying they deserve 'better than buttons'.

Cadbury recorded profits of £112 million at the end of July and a 12% rise in sales.

"This is about opportunism and trying to exploit people's fears at a time of global recession, despite the fact they're doing fantastically well," said David Glasper, union convenor at Marlbrook.

Workers have been balloted for strike action and the result should be known by the end of August. Hereford Solidarity League give them our full support; good luck guys.

Elsewhere workers are also taking action to save their jobs. Following the occupations by Visteon workers across the UK, new struggles are taking place across the country and some are getting a result.

Victimisation of workers at a Lincolnshire oil refinery for involvement in an earlier industrial dispute resulted in 51 redundancies, triggering further action; around 1,200 workers walked out on wildcat strike with the messages of 'sack the bosses, not the workers' and 'no to 51 job losses—share out the work'.

The strikers refused to back down in a strong show of solidarity with the sacked workers. This clearly worried the contracting bosses, who responded by sacking 647 striking workers, one of the most large scale sackings in recent times; a further 3,000 workers from eight other sites across the country walking out in support.

Mass rallies were held at the site in Lincolnshire, with workers burning their dismissal notices in a sign of protest against their treatment, and blocking roads around the site.

The bosses backed down: the 51 workers

originally made redundant were given their jobs back, as were the 647 workers sacked for their sympathy actions. One Lindsey worker told the *Hereford Heckler*: "it would appear to be a small victory in a much larger struggle, a view echoed by other lads I have talked to."

More recently workers for an Isle of Wight wind turbine company have occupied their factory in protest at Vestas' plans to axe 625 jobs.



The workers have received huge support from environmentalists and trade unionists around the country and are calling for the company to be nationalised.

As we go to press, the workers are continuing to occupy the factory despite Vestas being granted a possession order from Newport County Court. One worker said they will ignore the order and stay for as long as possible.

Meanwhile five people have started a rooftop protest at Vestas' Venture Quays building in Cowes.

The four men and one woman have hung banners reading: "In solidarity with the Vestas workers" and "Fight for green jobs". We take our hats off to them.

This sort of action is set to be repeated across the country in the coming months, with the same uncompromising message – the workers united will never be defeated!

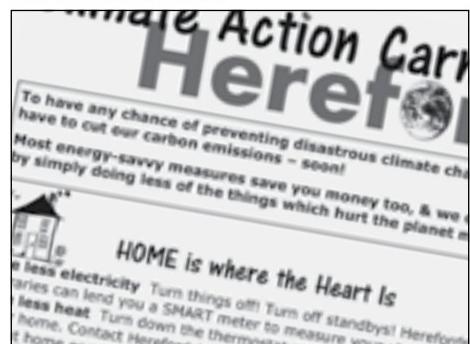
For more news and resources go to www.libcom.org

Saturday 29th August

CLIMATE CARNIVAL

Environmentalists in Hereford are holding climate action carnivals on the last Saturday of every month. The next one is 29th August in High Town.

Visit www.climateactioncarnivalhereford.info for more information.



Heckler TV presents

MIGRANT STORIES



This month, for your televisual enjoyment, Heckler TV brings you 'Migrant Stories'.

Migrant Stories is a collection of short films that have been created by the Hereford based Rural Media Company. All these film give a voice to people whose stories are often ignored by the mainstream media.

The people interviewed in these films tell their experiences of living and working in Herefordshire either as foreign workers or as local residents. Rural Media hope that the project will "form better understanding between migrant workers and local residents in Herefordshire".

You can watch Migrant Stories at Heckler TV on www.youtube.com/hecklertv

BASH THE FASH

ANTI-FASCIST NEWS AND VIEWS

■ Despite being elected as MEP for the north-west in June, Nick Griffin's election night did not go quite to plan. On arrival at the election count in Manchester, his vehicle was confronted by anti-fascists who pelted it with eggs and other missiles, stopping him from leaving. He eventually emerged, cowering behind an entourage of security guards ... and an hour late!

■ Only a couple of days later, Griffin had to abandon a press conference in London after more anti-fascists pelted him and his security team with eggs. This time, they hit their target with Griffin's suit getting covered. The head of the BNP security was left waddling along behind the protesters, missing most of the action. BNP security? What a yoke!

■ Nasty Nick isn't just an egg magnet, he's a drinks magnet too! He was dining out with other BNP members at a Gloucestershire pub when an argument erupted between the group and an 18-year-old who didn't take too kindly to their presence. The lad was ejected from the pub, but waited outside for them to leave where he threw his drink all over the BNP leader. Somebody buy that man (another) pint!

■ The BNP lost a seat in a Nottinghamshire council by a large margin in a one-time stronghold of theirs. Having experienced what the fascists are actually like in power the electorate had clearly had enough. Too right!

■ The host of the BNP's much-hated 'Red, White and Blue' festival has decided to pack up his stuff and move out of his Derbyshire village, much to the pleasure of the locals. Alan Warner, who has used his farm to host the festival for the past two years, said he has had enough of protestors and acts of vandalism against his property. Neighbour John Lumsden said: "I'd love him to leave and take the BNP festival with him, although I'll only believe it when I see it." More recently, anti-fascists again paid him a midnight visit. His gates were locked and graffiti sprayed on his front wall. That's what happens when you leave the security in the hands of a mannequin in a fluorescent jacket! We told you BNP security were dummies. Cheerio, Alan!

To find out more about the struggle against fascism go to www.antifa.org.uk or email hereford-antifa@safe-mail.net with any local information.

Sport



WALKING ADVERT FOR CARGILL? NO THANKS!

As the new season kicks off Hereford United FC now sport a new logo emblazoned on the front of their shirts. It's goodbye Sun Valley and hello Cargill. Of course Cargill have owned Sun Valley for a long time so the change is only cosmetic.

So what about Cargill? As many of us will be advertising them on our replica shirts we thought we'd have a little dig to see what this company is all about.

Cargill Inc. was founded in 1865 by Mr William Wallace Cargill. It is now the biggest privately owned company in the world with a turnover of \$120.4 Billion (2008). They have their fingers in a variety of pies, mainly fishing, farming and agriculture.

One of their biggest pies is the production and export of soya beans used in animal feed. Unfortunately, Cargill have been burning large swaths of the Amazon rainforest in order to grow this soya. Environmental activists Earth First! have stated that "Cargill is expanding its soya plantations, displacing communities, food crops and destroying ecosystems. Destroying rainforests, and other biodiverse ecosystems, is one of the quickest ways of heating the planet." In order to speed up their deforestation program Cargill have built a port in the heart of the Amazon to export their soya. Much of this is shipped to Liverpool and then on to Hereford where it makes up 25% of the feed that Sun Valley uses.

Cargill clearly don't give a tom tit about the



environment but human rights are pretty low down on their list of priorities as well.

In 2005 a law suit was issued against the company for its involvement in the trafficking, torture and forced labour of African children on cocoa farms. This was nothing new to Cargill who in 2004 commented on the use of child labour to pick their cotton in Uzbekistan saying "children who picked cotton did so to help their parents." Oh, that makes it OK then does it?!

Maybe we shouldn't have these animal abusing, child hating, forest burning company on our shirts after all. Perhaps Mr Turner should get on the phone to Westons Cider about a proper local sponsor we can be proud of!

For more info <http://tinyurl.com/lzzsae>

Five surgeons are discussing which are the best patients to operate on...

The first surgeon says, "I like to see accountants on my operating table because when you open them up, everything inside is numbered."

The second responds, "You should try electricians. Everything inside them is colour-coded."

The third surgeon says, "I really think librarians are the best. Everything inside them is in alphabetical order."

The fourth surgeon chimes in, "I like construction workers. Those guys always understand when you have a few parts left over at the end, and when the job takes longer than you said it would."

The fifth surgeon shut them all up when he observed, "You're all wrong. Politicians are the easiest to operate on. There's no guts, no heart, no balls, no brains and no spine. And there are only two moving parts – the mouth and the arsehole. And they're interchangeable."



You know a politician is lying when he opens his mouth

Goodbye Blackfriars ... but new stand on the way

Far be it for us at the *Heckler* to get wound up by authority but you have to wonder what idiots are running football in this country. With crowds down and no hint of safety problems they have ordered the closure of the Blackfriars Stand on health and safety grounds. Even with large away support for the likes of Leeds, or those south Wales minnows, we haven't had any serious issues.

Edgar Street rarely suffers from any problems, and that is mainly due to sensible stewarding. Yet again



bureaucracy is getting in the way of common sense.

We're sure that everyone will agree that it'll be good to have a new stand

built though. New turnstiles, new toilets, better access for disabled fans and new food outlets (selling more out of date muck!). For many fans it'll be the first ground improvements they have seen.

Although most supporters appear to prefer new terracing, more bureaucracy means we'll be getting an all seated stand. All the club needs to do now is wait for planning permission to be granted. A couple of grand given to the right councillor should speed that along!